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STATE PASS TO AID

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [KMDR JO](#)

SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION ON SIGNATURE OF FOREIGN
RELATIONS AUTHORIZATION ACT AND CONGRESSIONAL
RESOLUTION ON IRAQ

Summary

-- Lead stories in all papers today, October 3, highlight the resolution text agreed to by leaders of the U.S. House of Representatives and some U.S. Senators authorizing President Bush to use force against Iraq. Under headlines such as "Beat of U.S.-Iraq war drums goes on" (Jordan Times) and "Bush takes new step towards war" (Al-Arab Al-Yawm), reports highlight President Bush's press conference in the White House welcoming the resolution. Another lead story reports Jordan's official reaction to the U.S. legislation regarding Jerusalem. Minister of Information Mohammad Adwan voiced "deep concern" over the legislation and considered the move a "contradiction with international law and relevant U.N. resolutions, and a dangerous violation of the rights of the Palestinian people."

One editorial criticizes the U.S. decision on Jerusalem, arguing that many people will now see Congress as "the bastion of enmity and hostility towards the Arabs." Influential columnist Urayb Rantawi, however, maintains that the reaction to this issue is another tempest in a teacup, and will disappear as soon as the resolution to strike Iraq is adopted.

Editorial Commentary

-- "The catastrophic stroke of the pen"

Centrist, influential among the elite English daily Jordan Times (10/03) editorializes: "By signing into law a congressional bill asking that Jerusalem be considered the capital of Israel in all official documents, President George Bush not only violated international principles and U.N. Security Council resolutions. He condemned the Palestinians to more frustration, Israelis to more violence and the whole region to more instability. The message that Bush sent to the international community at large is that, whatever unlawful actions a country has committed. Washington will not only condone, but also sanction the outcome of such actions. The message that Bush sent to Palestinians and Arabs, both Muslims and Christians, is that his administration has already decided the outcome of final status talks even before their start; that the whole peace process is useless and irrelevant; that he has subscribed to the policy of Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon. Bush's decision was indeed a catastrophe for Palestinians, Israelis, Arabs, the region, the international community as a whole and - it will show soon enough - U.S. interests and foreign as well as domestic policies."

-- "The Congress and the war against Palestine and Iraq"

Center-left, influential Arabic daily Al-Dustour (10/03) editorial concludes: "A number of people inside and outside the region are going to view the U.S. Congress as one of the bastions of extremism and enmity towards Arab and Muslim causes. The ink did not even dry on the U.S. legislation when the Congress issued another resolution authorizing the U.S. President to use force against Iraq. This means that the American legislative authority has turned into a war organization, led by Washington, against Arab causes and their rights in Palestine and Iraq."

-- "The Jerusalem law"

Daily columnist Urayb Rantawi writes on the op-ed page

of center-left, influential Arabic daily Al-Dustour (10/03): "The Congressional law will pass like so many others before it. The Security Council will issue a resolution reiterating the international community's rejection of any unilateral measures. The need to activate the negotiations to reach an agreement will be stressed. The law is a storm in a tea cup that will be over as soon as the other storm in a tea cup starts -- the expected resolution on Iraq."
GNEHM